



THE PRIVATE LIFE  
OF  
MARIE ANTOINETTE



(22)

(8)

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL  
*Memoirs of Madame Campan*

FIRST LADY-IN-WAITING TO MARIE ANTOINETTE,  
QUEEN OF FRANCE AND NAVARRE

WITH SOME  
*RECORDS OF HER LIFE AND CONVERSATIONS*

BY  
MM. BARRIÈRE AND MAIGNÉ



Second Revised Edition  
WITH SIXTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS ON STEEL

IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. II.

LONDON  
RICHARD BENTLEY AND SON  
Publishers in Ordinary to Her Majesty the Queen

1884

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OF  
MARIE ANTOINETTE  
QUEEN OF FRANCE AND NAVARRE

WITH  
*SKETCHES AND ANECDOTES OF THE COURTS OF  
LOUIS XIV., LOUIS XV., AND LOUIS XVI.*

BY  
JEANNE LOUISE HENRIETTE CAMPAN  
FIRST LADY-IN-WAITING TO THE QUEEN

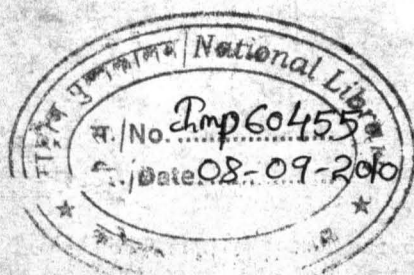


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*Marie Antoinette.*

*Grave par Moret, sous la direction d'Henriquel Dupont, d'après le portrait  
peint sur nature par Westphallier premier peintre du Roi de Suède Gustave III*



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# THE PRIVATE LIFE OF MARIE ANTOINETTE

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## CHAPTER I.

The diamond necklace—Account of Böhmer the jeweller—His interview with Madame Campan—The Cardinal de Rohan interrogated in the King's Cabinet—Particulars relative to Madame de Lamotte and her family—Steps taken by the Cardinal's relations—The prosecution—The clergy remonstrate—Decree of the Parliament—The Queen's grief—Remark of Louis XVI.

SHORTLY after the public mind had been thrown into agitation by the performance of the *Marriage of Figaro*, an obscure plot, contrived by swindlers and matured in a corrupted society, attacked the Queen's character in a vital point and assailed the majesty of the throne.

I am about to speak of the notorious affair of the necklace purchased, as it was said, for the Queen by Cardinal de Rohan.<sup>1</sup> I will narrate every circum-

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<sup>1</sup> For full details of the affair of the diamond necklace, see the work by M. Émile Campardon, *Marie Antoinette et le Procès du Collier*, Paris, Plon, 1863. The *Memoirs* of Madame Campan



stance that has come to my knowledge relating to this business ; the most minute particulars will prove how little reason the Queen had to apprehend the blow by which she was threatened ; and which must be attributed to a fatality that human prudence could not have foreseen ; but from which, to say the truth, she might have extricated herself with more skill.<sup>1</sup>

I have already said that in 1774 the Queen purchased jewels of Bœhmer to the value of three hundred and sixty thousand francs, that she paid for them herself out of her own private funds, and that it required several years to enable her to com-

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are frequently quoted in this work, in which the answers of the Cardinal and of the other persons implicated to the interrogations made are given, with an engraving of the too celebrated collar.

<sup>1</sup> In order to comprehend the account about to be given by Madame Campan, and to appreciate the importance of her historical testimony on this wretched intrigue, the reader should be in possession of the leading facts. There are many remarkable circumstances which, though connected with Madame Campan's narrative, do not form part of it, because she speaks only of what she knew well. A great number of persons acted culpable parts in this shameful drama ; it is necessary to be acquainted with them. No one knew the whole affair better than the Abbé Georgel, but at the same time no one was more devoted to the Cardinal de Rohan, or showed more ingenuity in discovering means of defending him, or greater skill in throwing, with artfully affected delicacy, a false light upon the irreproachable conduct of a Princess made the victim of shocking suspicions through either the blind credulity or the corruption of a Prince of the Church. The Abbé reveals in this part of his *Memoirs* a respectful hatred against Marie Antoinette. He supposes the Queen to be aware of the transaction, while she was still wrapped in all the security of a woman whose imagination could not even conceive the idea of such a masterpiece of intrigue. The reader will do well to glance at his statement [see Appendix] and observe how far the assertions it contains are weakened or disproved by Madame Campan.—*Note by the Editor.*

plete the payment. The King afterwards presented her with a set of rubies and diamonds of a fine water, and subsequently with a pair of bracelets worth two hundred thousand francs. The Queen, after having her diamonds reset in new patterns, told Bœhmer that she found her jewel-case rich enough, and was not desirous of making any addition to it.<sup>1</sup> Still, this jeweller busied himself for some years in forming a collection of the finest diamonds circulating in the trade, in order to compose a necklace of several rows, which he hoped to induce her Majesty to pur-

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<sup>1</sup> Except on those days when the assemblies at Court were particularly attended, such as the 1st of January and the 2d of February, devoted to the procession of the Order of the Holy Ghost, and on the festivals of Easter, Whitsuntide, and Christmas, the Queen no longer wore any dresses but muslin or white Florentine taffety. Her head-dress was merely a hat; the plainest were preferred; and her diamonds never quitted their caskets but for the dresses of ceremony, confined to the days I have mentioned. Before the Queen was five-and-twenty she began to apprehend that she might be induced to make too frequent use of flowers and of ornaments, which at that time were exclusively reserved for youth. Madame Bertin having brought a wreath for the head and neck, composed of roses, the Queen feared that the brightness of the flowers might be disadvantageous to her complexion. She was unquestionably too severe upon herself, her beauty having as yet experienced no alteration; it is easy to conceive the concert of praise and compliment that replied to the doubt she had expressed. The Queen, approaching me, said, "I charge you, from this day, to give me notice when flowers shall cease to become me." "I shall do no such thing," I replied immediately; "I have not read *Gil Blas* without profiting in some degree from it, and I find your Majesty's order too much like that given him by the Archbishop of Granada, to warn him of the moment when he should begin to fall off in the composition of his homilies." "Go," said the Queen; "you are less sincere than *Gil Blas*; and I would have been more amenable than the Archbishop."—*Madame Campan.*

chase ; he brought it to M. Campan, requesting him to mention it to the Queen, that she might ask to see it, and thus be induced to wish to possess it. This M. Campan refused to do, telling him that he should be stepping out of the line of his duty were he to propose to the Queen an expense of sixteen hundred thousand francs, and that he believed neither the lady of honour nor the tirewoman would take upon herself to execute such a commission. Bœhmer persuaded the King's first gentleman for the year to show this superb necklace to his Majesty, who admired it so much that he himself wished to see the Queen adorned with it and sent the case to her ; but she assured him she should much regret incurring so great an expense for such an article, that she had already very beautiful diamonds, that jewels of that description were now worn at Court not more than four or five times a year, that the necklace must be returned, and that the money would be much better employed in building a man-of-war.<sup>1</sup> Bœhmer, in sad tribulation at finding his expectations delusive, endeavoured for some time, it is said, to dispose of his necklace among the various Courts of Europe. A year after his fruitless attempts, Bœhmer again caused his diamond necklace

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<sup>1</sup> Messrs. Bœhmer and Bassange, jewellers to the Crown, were proprietors of a superb diamond necklace, which had, as it was said, been intended for the Comtesse du Barry. Being under the necessity of selling it, they offered it, during the last war, to the King and Queen ; but their Majesties made the following prudent answer : "*We stand more in need of ships than of jewels.*"—*Secret Correspondence of the Court of Louis XVI.*

to be offered to the King, proposing that it should be paid for partly by instalments, and partly in life annuities ; this proposal was represented as highly advantageous, and the King, in my presence, mentioned the matter once more to the Queen. I remember the Queen told him that if the bargain really was not bad, he might make it, and keep the necklace until the marriage of one of his children ; but that, for her part, she would never wear it, being unwilling that the world should have to reproach her with having coveted so expensive an article. The King replied that their children were too young to justify such an expense, which would be greatly increased by the number of years the diamonds would remain useless, and that he would finally decline the offer. Bœhmer complained to everybody of his misfortune, and all reasonable people blamed him for having collected diamonds to so considerable an amount without any positive order for them. This man had purchased the office of jeweller to the Crown, which gave him some rights of entry at Court. After several months spent in ineffectual attempts to carry his point, and in idle complaints, he obtained an audience of the Queen, who had with her the young Princess her daughter ; her Majesty did not know for what purpose Bœhmer sought this audience, and had not the slightest idea that it was to speak to her again about an article twice refused by herself and the King.

Bœhmer threw himself upon his knees, clasped his hands, burst into tears, and exclaimed, " Madame,

I am ruined and disgraced if you do not purchase my necklace. I cannot outlive so many misfortunes. When I go hence I shall throw myself into the river.” “Rise, Bœhmer,” said the Queen, in a tone sufficiently severe to recall him to himself; “I do not like these rhapsodies; honest men have no occasion to fall on their knees to make their requests. If you were to destroy yourself I should regret you as a madman in whom I had taken an interest, but I should not be in any way responsible for that misfortune. Not only have I never ordered the article which causes your present despair, but whenever you have talked to me about fine collections of jewels I have told you that I should not add four diamonds to those which I already possessed. I told you myself that I declined taking the necklace; the King wished to give it to me, but I refused him also; never mention it to me again. Divide it, and try to sell it piecemeal, and do not drown yourself. I am very angry with you for acting this scene of despair in my presence and before this child. Let me never see you behave thus again. Go.” Bœhmer withdrew, overwhelmed with confusion, and nothing farther was then heard of him.

When Madame Sophie was born the Queen told me M. de Sainte James, a rich financier, had apprised her that Bœhmer was still intent upon the sale of his necklace, and that she ought, for her own satisfaction, to endeavour to learn what the man had done with it; she desired me the first time I should meet him to speak to him about it, as if from the

interest I took in his welfare. I spoke to him about his necklace, and he told me he had been very fortunate, having sold it at Constantinople for the favourite sultana. I communicated this answer to the Queen, who was delighted with it, but could not comprehend how the Sultan came to purchase his diamonds in Paris.

The Queen long avoided seeing Bœhmer, being fearful of his rash character ; and her *valet de chambre*, who had the care of her jewels, made the necessary repairs to her ornaments unassisted. On the baptism of the Duc d'Angoulême in 1785 the King gave him a diamond epaulette and buckles, and directed Bœhmer to deliver them to the Queen. Bœhmer presented them on her return from mass, and at the same time gave into her hands a letter in the form of a petition. In this paper he told the Queen that he was happy to see her "in possession of the finest diamonds known in Europe," and entreated her not to forget him. The Queen read Bœhmer's address to her aloud, and saw nothing in it but a proof of mental aberration ; she lighted the paper at a wax taper standing near her, as she had some letters to seal, saying, "It is not worth keeping." She afterwards much regretted the loss of this enigmatical memorial. After having burnt the paper, her Majesty said to me, "That man is born to be my torment ; he has always some mad scheme in his head ; remember, the first time you see him, to tell him that I do not like diamonds now, and that I will buy no more so long as I live ; that if I had any money to spare, I would rather add to my

property at Saint Cloud by the purchase of the land surrounding it ; now, mind you enter into all these particulars and impress them well upon him." I asked her whether she wished me to send for him ; she replied in the negative, adding that it would be sufficient to avail myself of the first opportunity afforded by meeting him ; and that the slightest advance towards such a man would be misplaced.

On the 1st of August I left Versailles for my country house at Crespy ; on the 3d came Bœhmer, extremely uneasy at not having received any answer from the Queen, to ask me whether I had any commission from her to him ; I replied that she had entrusted me with none ; that she had no commands for him, and I faithfully repeated all she had desired me to say to him. "But," said Bœhmer, "the answer to the letter I presented to her—to whom must I apply for that?" "To nobody," answered I ; "her Majesty burnt your memorial without even comprehending its meaning." "Ah! madame," exclaimed he, "that is impossible ; the Queen knows that she has money to pay me!" "Money, M. Bœhmer? Your last accounts against the Queen were discharged long ago." "Madame, you are not in the secret. A man who is ruined for want of payment of fifteen hundred thousand francs cannot be said to be satisfied." "Have you lost your senses?" said I ; "for what can the Queen owe you so extravagant a sum!" "For my necklace, madame," replied Bœhmer coolly. "How!" returned I, "that necklace again, which you have teased the Queen about



so many years ! Did you not tell me you had sold it at Constantinople ?” “ The Queen desired me to give that answer to all who should speak to me on the subject,” said the wretched dupe. He then told me that the Queen wished to have the necklace, and had had it purchased for her by Monseigneur the Cardinal de Rohan. “ You are deceived,” I exclaimed ; “ the Queen has not once spoken to the Cardinal since his return from Vienna ; there is not a man at her Court less favourably looked upon.” “ You are deceived yourself, madame,” said Bœhmer ; “ she sees him so much in private, that it was to his Eminence she gave thirty thousand francs, which were paid me as an instalment ; she took them, in his presence, out of the little *secrétaire* of Sèvres porcelain next the fireplace in her boudoir.” “ And the Cardinal told you all this ?” “ Yes, madame, himself.” “ What a detestable plot !” cried I.—“ Indeed, to say the truth, madame, I begin to be much alarmed, for his Eminence assured me that the Queen would wear the necklace on Whit-Sunday, but I did not see it upon her, and it was that which induced me to write to her Majesty.” He then asked me what he ought to do. I advised him to go on to Versailles, instead of returning to Paris, whence he had just arrived ; to obtain an immediate audience from the Baron de Breteuil, who, as head of the King’s household, was the minister of the department to which Bœhmer belonged, and to be circumspect ; and I added, that he appeared to me extremely culpable, not as a diamond merchant, but



because being a sworn officer it was unpardonable of him to have acted without the direct orders of the King, the Queen, or the minister. He answered, that he had not acted without direct orders; that he had in his possession all the notes signed by the Queen, and that he had even been obliged to show them to several bankers in order to induce them to extend the time for his payments. I urged his departure for Versailles, and he assured me he would go there immediately. Instead of following my advice, he went to the Cardinal, and it was of this visit of Bœhmer's that his Eminence made a memorandum, found in a drawer overlooked by the Abbé Georgel when he burnt, by order of the Cardinal, all the papers which the latter had at Paris. The memorandum was thus worded: "On this day, 3d August, Bœhmer went to Madame Campan's country house, and she told him that the Queen had never had his necklace, and that he had been deceived."

When Bœhmer was gone, I wanted to follow him, and go to the Queen; my father-in-law prevented me, and ordered me to leave the minister to elucidate such an important affair, observing that it was an infernal plot; that I had given Bœhmer the best advice, and had nothing more to do with the business. Bœhmer never said one word to me about the woman De Lamotte, and her name was mentioned for the first time by the Cardinal in his answers to the interrogatories put to him before the King. After seeing the Cardinal, Bœhmer went to Trianon, and sent a message to the Queen,

purporting that I had advised him to come and speak to her. His very words were repeated to her Majesty, who said, "He is mad; I have nothing to say to him, and will not see him." Two or three days afterwards the Queen sent for me to Petit Trianon, to rehearse with me the part of Rosina, which she was to perform in the *Barber of Seville*. I was alone with her, sitting upon her couch; no mention was made of anything but the part. After we had spent an hour in the rehearsal, her Majesty asked me why I had sent Bœhmer to her; saying he had been in my name to speak to her, and that she would not see him. It was in this manner I learnt that he had not followed my advice in the slightest degree. The change of my countenance, when I heard the man's name, was very perceptible; the Queen perceived it, and questioned me. I entreated her to see him, and assured her it was of the utmost importance for her peace of mind; that there was a plot going on, of which she was not aware; and that it was a serious one, since engagements signed by herself were shown about to people who had lent Bœhmer money. Her surprise and vexation were excessive. She desired me to remain at Trianon, and sent off a courier to Paris, ordering Bœhmer to come to her upon some pretext which has escaped my recollection. He came next morning; in fact it was the day on which the play was performed, and that was the last amusement the Queen allowed herself at that retreat.

The Queen made him enter her closet, and asked

him by what fatality it was that she was still doomed to hear of his foolish pretence of selling her an article which she had steadily refused for several years? He replied, that he was compelled, being unable to pacify his creditors any longer. "What are your creditors to me?" said her Majesty. Boëhmer then regularly related to her all that he had been made to believe had passed between the Queen and himself through the intervention of the Cardinal. She was equally incensed and surprised at each thing she heard. In vain did she speak; the jeweller, equally importunate and dangerous, repeated incessantly, "Madame, there is no longer time for feigning; condescend to confess that you have my necklace, and let some assistance be given to me, or my bankruptcy will soon bring the whole to light."

It is easy to imagine how the Queen must have suffered. On Boëhmer's going away, I found her in an alarming condition; the idea that any one could have believed that such a man as the Cardinal possessed her full confidence; that she should have employed him to deal with a tradesman without the King's knowledge, for a thing which she had refused to accept from the King himself, drove her to desperation. She sent first for the Abbé de Vermond, and then for the Baron de Breteuil. Their hatred and contempt for the Cardinal made them too easily forget that the lowest vices do not prevent the higher orders of the empire from being defended by those to whom they have the honour to belong; that a Rohan, a Prince of the Church, however cul-

pable he might be, would be sure to have a considerable party which would naturally be joined by all the discontented persons of the Court, and all the *frondeurs* of Paris.

They too easily believed that he would be stripped of all the advantages of his rank and order, and given up to the disgrace due to his irregular conduct ; they deceived themselves.

I saw the Queen after the departure of the Baron and the Abbé; her agitation made me shudder. "Hideous vices must be unmasked," said she; "when the Roman purple and the title of Prince cover a mere money-seeker, a cheat who dares to compromise the wife of his sovereign, France and all Europe should know it." It is evident that from that moment the fatal plan was decided on. The Queen perceived my alarm; I did not conceal it from her. I knew too well that she had many enemies not to be apprehensive on seeing her attract the attention of the whole world to an intrigue that they would try to complicate still more. I entreated her to seek the most prudent and moderate advice. She silenced me by desiring me to make myself easy, and to rest satisfied that no imprudence would be committed.

On the following Sunday, the 15th of August, being the Assumption, at twelve o'clock, at the very moment when the Cardinal, dressed in his pontifical garments, was about to proceed to the chapel, he was sent for into the King's closet, where the Queen then was. The King said to him, "You

have purchased diamonds of Bœhmer?"—"Yes, Sire."—"What have you done with them?"—"I thought they had been delivered to the Queen."—"Who commissioned you?"—"A lady, called the Comtesse de Lamotte-Valois, who handed me a letter from the Queen; and I thought I was gratifying her Majesty by taking this business on myself." The Queen here interrupted him and said, "How, sir, could you believe that I should select you, to whom I have not spoken for eight years, to negotiate anything for me, and especially through the mediation of a woman whom I do not even know?"—"I see plainly," said the Cardinal, "that I have been duped; I will pay for the necklace; my desire to please your Majesty blinded me; I suspected no trick in the affair, and I am sorry for it." He then took out of his pocket-book a letter from the Queen to Madame de Lamotte, giving him this commission. The King took it, and holding it towards the Cardinal, said, "This is neither written nor signed by the Queen; how could a Prince of the House of Rohan, and a Grand Almoner of France, ever think that the Queen would sign *Marie Antoinette de France*? Everybody knows that Queens sign only by their baptismal names.<sup>1</sup> But, sir," pursued the

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<sup>1</sup> The Cardinal ought, it has been said, to have detected the forgery of the approbations and signature to the instructions; his place of Grand Almoner gave him the opportunity of knowing both her Majesty's writing and her manner of signing her name. To this important objection it is answered, that it was long since M. de Rohan had seen her writing; that he did not recollect it; that, besides, not being at all suspicious, he had no

King, handing him a copy of his letter to Bœhmer, "have you ever written such a letter as this?" Having glanced over it, the Cardinal said, "I do not remember having written it."—"But what if the original, signed by yourself, were shown to you?"—"If the letter be signed by myself it is genuine." He was extremely confused, and repeated several times, "I have been deceived, Sire; I will pay for the necklace. I ask pardon of your Majesties."—"Then explain to me," resumed the King, "the whole of this enigma. I do not wish to find you guilty; I had rather you would justify yourself. Account for all the manœuvres with Bœhmer, these assurances and these letters." The Cardinal then, turning pale, and leaning against the table, said, "Sire, I am too much confused to answer your Majesty in a way——" "Compose yourself, Cardinal, and go into my cabinet, you will there find paper, pens, and ink, write what you have to say to me." The Cardinal went into the King's cabinet, and returned a quarter of an hour afterwards with a document as confused as his verbal answers had been. The King then said, "Withdraw, sir." The Cardinal left the King's chamber, with the Baron de Breteuil, who gave him in custody to a lieutenant of the Body Guard, with orders to take him to his apartment. M. d'Agoult, aide-major of the Body

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inducement to endeavour to verify it; and that the Crown jewellers, to whom he showed the instrument, had not, any more than himself, detected the imposition.—*Secret Correspondence of the Court of Louis XVI.*

Guard, afterwards took him into custody, and conducted him to his hôtel, and from thence to the Bastille. But while the Cardinal had with him only the young lieutenant of the Body Guard, who was much embarrassed at having such an order to execute, his Eminence met his *heyduc* at the door of the Salon of Hercules; he spoke to him in German, and then asked the lieutenant if he could lend him a pencil; the officer gave him that which he carried about him, and the Cardinal wrote to the Abbé Georgel, his grand vicar and friend, instantly to burn all Madame de Lamotte's correspondence, and all his other letters.<sup>1</sup> This commission was executed before M. de Crosne, lieutenant of police, had received an order from the Baron de Breteuil to

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<sup>1</sup> The *Secret Correspondence* thus explains the officer's conduct and confusion:—

“The lieutenant, being reprimanded for suffering the Cardinal to write, replied that his orders did not forbid it; and that, besides, he had been much disconcerted by the unusual address of the Baron de Breteuil—‘*Sir, in the King's name follow me;*’ that he had not recovered himself and did not perfectly know what he was about. This excuse is not very satisfactory, though it is true that this officer, who was very irregular in his conduct, was much in debt, and at first feared that the order concerned himself personally.”

The Abbé Georgel relates the circumstance in a very different manner:—

“The Cardinal, at that dreadful moment, gave an astonishing proof of his presence of mind: notwithstanding the escort which surrounded him, favoured by the attendant crowd, he stopped, and stooping down with his face towards the wall, as if to fasten his buckle, snatched out his pencil and hastily wrote a few words upon a scrap of paper placed under his hand in his square red cap. He rose again and proceeded. On entering his house, his people formed a lane; he slipped this paper, unperceived, into the hand of a confidential *valet de chambre*, who waited for him





Jules David del.

Andersson sc.

The arrest of Cardinal de Rohan

Paris: Richard Bentley and Son: 1834



put seals upon the Cardinal's papers. The destruction of all his Eminence's correspondence, and particularly that with Madame de Lamotte, threw an impenetrable cloud over the whole affair.<sup>1</sup>

From that moment all proofs of this intrigue disappeared. Madame de Lamotte was apprehended at Bar-sur-Aube; her husband had already gone to England. From the beginning of this fatal affair all the proceedings of the Court appear to have been prompted by imprudence and want of foresight; the obscurity resulting left free scope for the fables of which the voluminous memorials written on one side and the other consisted. The Queen so little imagined what could have given rise to the intrigue, of which she was about to become the victim, that at the moment when the King was interrogating the Cardinal, a terrific idea entered her mind. With that rapidity of thought caused by

at the door of his apartment." This story is scarcely credible: it is not at the moment of a prisoner's arrest, when an inquisitive crowd surrounds and watches him, that he can stop and write mysterious words. However, the *valet de chambre* posts off to Paris. He arrives at the palace of the Cardinal between twelve and one o'clock; and his horse falls dead in the stable. "I was in my apartment," says the Abbé Georgel, "the *valet de chambre* entered wildly, with a deadly paleness on his countenance, and exclaimed, '*All is lost; the Prince is arrested.*' He instantly fell, fainting, and dropped the note of which he was the bearer." The portfolio containing the papers which might compromise the Cardinal was immediately placed beyond the reach of all search.—*Note by the Editor.*

<sup>1</sup> Madame de Lamotte was foolishly allowed sufficient time after she heard of the arrest of the Cardinal to burn all the letters she had received from him. Assisted by Beugnot, she completed this at three the same morning that she was arrested at four.—See *Memoirs of Count Beugnot*, vol. i. p. 74.

personal interest and extreme agitation, she fancied that if a design to ruin her in the eyes of the King and the French people were the concealed motive of this intrigue, the Cardinal would, perhaps, affirm that she had the necklace; that he had been honoured with her confidence for this purchase, made without the King's knowledge; and point out some secret place in her apartment, where he might have got some villain to hide it. Want of money and the meanest swindling were the sole motives for this criminal affair. The necklace had already been taken to pieces and sold, partly in London, partly in Holland, and the rest in Paris.

The moment the Cardinal's arrest was known a universal clamour arose. Every memorial that appeared during the trial increased the outcry. On this occasion the clergy took that course which a little wisdom and the least knowledge of the spirit of such a body ought to have foreseen. The Rohans and the House of Condé, as well as the clergy, made their complaints heard everywhere. The King consented to having a legal judgment, and early in September he addressed letters patent to the Parliament, in which he said that he was "penetrated with the most just indignation on seeing the means which, by the confession of his Eminence the Cardinal, had been employed in order to inculcate his most dear spouse and companion."

Fatal moment! in which the Queen found herself, in consequence of this highly impolitic step, on trial with a subject, who ought to have been

dealt with by the power of the King alone. Mistaken ideas of equity, ignorance and hatred, united with ill-digested advice to dictate a course of conduct injurious at the same time to the royal authority and to public morals.

The Princes and Princesses of the House of Condé, and of the Houses of Rohan, Soubise, and Guéménée, put on mourning, and were seen ranged in the way of the members of the Grand Chamber to salute them as they proceeded to the Palace, on the days of the Cardinal's trial; and Princes of the blood openly canvassed against the Queen of France.

The Pope wished to claim, on behalf of the Cardinal de Rohan, the right belonging to his ecclesiastical rank, and demanded that he should be judged at Rome. The Cardinal de Bernis, ambassador from France to his Holiness, formerly Minister for Foreign Affairs, blending the wisdom of an old diplomatist with the principles of a Prince of the Church, wished that this scandalous affair should be hushed up.

The King's aunts, who were on very intimate terms with the ambassador, adopted his opinion, and the conduct of the King and Queen was equally and loudly censured in the apartments of Versailles and in the hôtels and coffee-houses of Paris.

It is easy to refer to this transaction, alike fatal and unexpected, as wickedly planned as it was weakly and injudiciously punished, disorders which furnished many weapons to the party opposed to authority.

1130 15-1-2  
Madame, the King's sister-in-law, had been the sole protectress of De Lamotte, and had confined her patronage to granting her a pension of twelve to fifteen hundred francs. Her brother was in the navy, but the Marquis de Chabert, to whom he had been recommended, could never train a good officer. The Queen in vain endeavoured to call to mind the features of this person, of whom she had often heard as an intriguing woman, who came frequently on Sundays to the gallery of Versailles. At the time when all France was engrossed by the prosecution against the Cardinal, the portrait of the Comtesse de Lamotte-Valois was publicly sold. Her Majesty desired me one day, when I was going to Paris, to buy her the engraving, which was said to be a tolerable likeness, that she might ascertain whether she could recognise in it any person whom she might have seen in the gallery.<sup>1</sup>

The woman De Lamotte's father was a peasant at Auteuil, though he called himself Valois. Madame de Boulainvilliers once saw from her terrace two pretty little peasant girls, each labouring under a heavy bundle of sticks. The priest of the village, who was walking with her, told her that the children possessed some curious papers, and that he had no doubt they were descendants of a Valois, an illegitimate son of one of the Princes of that name.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The public, with the exception of the lowest class, were admitted into the gallery and larger apartments of Versailles, as they were into the park.—*Madame Campan*.

<sup>2</sup> Madame de Lamotte (Jeanne de Saint Rémi de Valois) was

The family of Valois had long ceased to appear in the world. Hereditary vices had gradually plunged them into the deepest misery. I have heard that the last Valois then known of occupied the estate called Gros Bois; that as he seldom came to Court, Louis XIII. asked him what he was about that he remained so constantly in the country; and that this M. de Valois merely answered, "*Sire, I only do there what I ought.*"<sup>1</sup> It was shortly afterwards discovered that he was *coining*.

Neither the Queen herself nor any one near her ever had the slightest connection with the woman De Lamotte; and during her prosecution she could point out but one of the Queen's servants, named Desclos, a valet of the Queen's bed-chamber, to whom she pretended she had delivered Bœhmer's necklace. This Desclos was a very honest man; upon being confronted with the woman De Lamotte, it was proved that she had never seen him but once, which was at the house of the wife of a surgeon-accoucheur at Versailles, the only person she visited at Court; and that she had not given him the necklace. Madame de Lamotte married a private in Monsieur's body-guard; she lodged at Versailles at the Belle

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born at Fontette, in the department of the Aube, 22d July 1756. She was the second child of Jacques de Saint Rémi de Valois, who at first called himself De Luz, and later De Valois, Baron de Saint Rémi, the seventh in descent from Henri de Saint Rémi, the son of Henri II., King of France, and of Nicole de Savigny, Dame de Saint Rémi, de Fontette, du Chatelier, and de Noëz.—*Marie Antoinette et le Procès du Collier*, Paris, Plon, 1863, p. 14.

<sup>1</sup> *Je n'y fait que ce que je dois*, which also means, "I only make what I owe," and in that sense was a true answer.

Image, a very inferior furnished house ; and it is inconceivable how so obscure a person could succeed in making herself believed to be a friend of the Queen, who, though so extremely affable, seldom granted audiences, and only to titled persons.

The trial of the Cardinal is too generally known to require me to repeat its details here.<sup>1</sup> The point most embarrassing to him was the interview he had in February 1785 with M. de Sainte James, to whom he confided the particulars of the Queen's pretended commission, and showed the contract approved and signed *Marie Antoinette de France*. The memorandum found in a drawer of the Car-

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<sup>1</sup> The letters patent which gave the Parliament cognisance of the process were couched in these terms :—

“Louis, etc. Having been informed that the Sieurs Bœhmer and Bassange sold the Cardinal de Rohan a necklace of brilliants ; that the said Cardinal de Rohan, without the knowledge of the Queen our beloved spouse and consort, told them he was authorised by her to purchase it at the price of sixteen hundred thousand livres, payable by instalments, and showed them false instructions to that effect, which he exhibited as approved by the Queen ; that the said necklace having been delivered by the said Bœhmer and Bassange to the said Cardinal, and the first payment agreed on between them not having been made good, they had recourse to the Queen ; we could not without just indignation see an august name, dear to us on so many accounts, thus daringly used, and the respect due to majesty violated with such unheard-of temerity. We therefore have deemed it incumbent to cite before us the said Cardinal, and upon his declaration to us that he had been deceived by a woman named Lamotte, called De Valois, we judged it indispensable to secure his person and that of the said Lamotte, called De Valois, and to take those steps suggested to us by our wisdom for the discovery of the authors or accomplices of an attempt of this nature ; and we have thought fit to refer the matter to you, that the process may be instituted and decided by you, the great chamber and criminal court assembled.”—*Note by the Editor.*

dinal's bureau, in which he had himself written what Bœhmer told him after having seen me at my country house, was likewise an unfortunate document for his Eminence.

I offered to the King to go and declare that Bœhmer had told me that the Cardinal assured him he had received from the Queen's own hand the thirty thousand francs given on account upon the bargain being concluded, and that his Eminence had seen her Majesty take that sum in bills from the porcelain *secrétaire* in her boudoir. The King declined my offer, and said to me, "Were you alone when Bœhmer told you this?" I answered that I was alone with him in my garden. "Well!" resumed he, "the man would deny the fact; he is now sure of being paid his sixteen hundred thousand francs, which the Cardinal's family will find it necessary to make good to him;<sup>1</sup> we can no longer rely upon his sincerity; it would look as if you were sent by the Queen, and that would not be proper."

The *procureur-général's* information was severe on the Cardinal. The Houses of Condé and Rohan

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<sup>1</sup> The guilty woman no sooner knew that all was about to be discovered than she sent for the jewellers, and told them the Cardinal had perceived that the agreement, which he believed to have been signed by the Queen, was a false and forged document. "However," added she, "the Cardinal possesses a considerable fortune, and he can very well pay you." These words reveal the whole secret. The Countess had taken the necklace to herself, and flattered herself that M. de Rohan, seeing himself deceived and cruelly imposed upon, would determine to pay and make the best terms he could, rather than suffer a matter of this nature to become public.—*Secret Correspondence of the Court of Louis XVI.*



and the majority of the nobility saw in this affair only an attack on the Prince's rank, the clergy only a blow aimed at the privileges of a Cardinal. The clergy demanded that the unfortunate business of the Prince Cardinal de Rohan should be submitted to ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and the Archbishop of Narbonne, then President of the Convocation, made representations upon the subject to the King;<sup>1</sup> the bishops wrote to his Majesty to remind him that a private ecclesiastic implicated in the affair then pending would have a right to claim his constitutional judges, and that this right was refused to a cardinal, his superior in the hierarchical order.<sup>2</sup> In short, the

<sup>1</sup> The clergy, then assembled, embraced this opportunity to assert its rights. The Archbishop of Narbonne spoke:—"My lords and gentlemen, no one among us is unaware that Cardinal de Rohan has had the misfortune to incur the King's displeasure. Without doubt, we have reason to fear that his guilt has been great, since his Majesty has thought proper to arrest him in a public manner, to secure his person and his papers. But Cardinal de Rohan is both a cardinal and a grand almoner, as well as bishop of the kingdom. This latter title, common to ourselves as well as to him, obliges us to claim the observance of the regulations which prescribe that a bishop must be tried by those of his own rank. God forbid that by so doing we should pretend to render our order exempt from punishment, and seduce it from the obedience due to the King!"—*Note by the Editor.*

<sup>2</sup> The Sovereign Pontiff assembled a consistory, which unanimously declared that the Cardinal de Rohan had erred against his dignity as a member of the sacred college in recognising the authority of Parliament, that he was suspended for six months, and that if he persisted he should be struck out of the list of cardinals. An Abbé Lemoine, a doctor of the Sorbonne, had to be sent to Rome to prove to the Pope that M. de Rohan had made the protests required by his dignity, and that he had only accepted the judgment of a secular tribunal because he had to yield to the will of his King.—Campardon, *Marie Antoinette et le Procès du Collier*, page 53.



clergy and the greater part of the nobility were at that time outrageous against authority, and chiefly against the Queen.

The *procureur-général's* conclusions, and those of a part of the heads of the magistracy, were as severe towards the Cardinal as the information had been; yet he was *fully acquitted* by a majority of three voices; the woman De Lamotte was condemned to be whipped, branded, and imprisoned; and her husband, for contumacy, was condemned to the galleys for life.

As soon as I heard of the sentence passed on the Cardinal I went to the Queen. She heard my voice in the anteroom. She called to me; I found her very much agitated. In a faltering voice she said, "Condole with me; the intriguer who wished to ruin me, or get money by misusing my name, and adopting my signature, has just been fully acquitted; but," added she, with warmth, "as a Frenchwoman let me pity you. Unfortunate indeed are a people who have for their supreme tribunal a set of men who consult only their passions; some of whom are capable of being corrupted, and others of an audacity which they have always manifested against authority, and which they have just suffered to break out against those who are invested with it."<sup>1</sup> At this moment the King entered, and I wished

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<sup>1</sup> The following extract is from the *Memoirs* of the Abbé Georgel:—"M. d'Epremeuil, a counsellor of the Parliament, but who was not a judge in the affair, found secret means to inform us of very interesting particulars, the knowledge of which

to withdraw. "Stay," said he to me; "you are one of those who sincerely participate in the grief of your mistress." He went up to the Queen and took her by the hand. "This affair," said he, "has been decided outrageously; however, that is very easily accounted for. To be able to cut this Gordian knot, it is not necessary to be an Alexander. In the Cardinal the Parliament saw only a Prince of the Church, a Prince de Rohan, the near relation of a Prince of the blood; while they ought to have seen in him a man unworthy of his ecclesiastical character, a great nobleman degraded by his shameful connections, a young spendthrift trying expedients, like many in Paris, and grasping at everything. He thought he would pay Bœhmer, on account, sums large enough to discharge the price of the necklace within a moderate time; but he knew the customs of the Court well enough, and was not so silly as to believe that Madame de Lamotte was received by the Queen and deputed to execute such a commission."

In giving the King's opinion, I do not pretend

was of the greatest utility to us." He adds in another place, speaking of the moment in which the decree was pronounced: "The sittings were long and multiplied; it was necessary to read the whole proceedings; more than fifty judges sat; a master of requests, a friend of the Prince, wrote down all that was said there, and sent it to his advisers, who found means to inform the Cardinal of it, and to add the plan of conduct he ought to pursue." D'Epreménil, and other young counsellors, showed upon that occasion but too much audacity in braving the Court, too much eagerness in seizing an opportunity of attacking it. They were the first to shake that authority which their functions made it a duty in them to respect.—*Note by the Editor.*

to speak decisively on the Cardinal's credulity or dishonesty ; but it got abroad, and I am bound to report the exact terms of a conversation in which he declared it with so little reserve. He still continued to speak of that dreadful trial, and condescended to say to me, "I have saved you a mortification, which you would have experienced, without any advantage to the Queen ; all the Cardinal's papers were burnt, with the exception of a little note written by him, which was found by itself at the bottom of a drawer ; it is dated in the latter end of July, and says that Bœhmer has seen Madame Campan, who told him to beware of the intrigue of which he would become the victim ; that she would lay her head upon the block to maintain that the Queen had never wished to have the necklace, and that she had certainly not purchased it secretly. Had you any such conversation with the man ?" concluded the King. I answered that I remembered having said nearly those very words to him, and that I had informed the Queen of it. "Well !" he resumed, "I was asked whether it would be agreeable to me that you should be summoned to appear ; and I replied that, if it were not absolutely indispensable, I should be obliged by their not summoning a person so intimately connected with the Queen as yourself. How could it, for instance, be explained that this man wrote the note in question three weeks before the day on which I spoke to him, without taking any step towards approaching either the Queen or myself ?"

M. Pierre de Laurencel, the *procureur-général's* substitute, sent the Queen a list of the names of the members of the Grand Chamber, with the means made use of by the friends of the Cardinal to gain their votes during the trial. I had this list to keep among the papers which the Queen deposited in the house of M. Campan, my father-in-law, and which, at his death, she ordered me to preserve. I burnt this statement, but I remember ladies performed a part not very creditable to their principles; it was by them, in consideration of large sums which they received, that some of the oldest and most respected members were won over. I did not see a single name amongst the whole Parliament that was gained directly.

The belief confirmed by time is, that the Cardinal was completely duped by the woman De La-motte and Cagliostro. The King may have been in error in thinking him an accomplice in this miserable and criminal scheme, but I have faithfully repeated his Majesty's judgment about it.

However, the generally received opinion that the Baron de Breteuil's hatred for the Cardinal was the cause of the scandal and the unfortunate result of this affair contributed to the disgrace of the former still more than his refusal to give his granddaughter in marriage to the son of the Duc de Polignac.

The Abbé de Vermond threw the whole blame of the imprudence and impolicy of the affair of the Cardinal de Rohan upon the minister, and ceased to be the friend and supporter of the Baron de Breteuil with the Queen.

In the early part of the year 1786 the Cardinal, as has been said, was fully acquitted, and came out of the Bastille, while Madame de Lamotte was condemned to be whipped, branded, and imprisoned. The Court, persisting in the erroneous views which had hitherto guided its measures, conceived that the Cardinal and the woman De Lamotte were equally culpable and unequally punished, and sought to restore the balance of justice by exiling the Cardinal to La Chaise-Dieu, and suffering Madame de Lamotte to escape a few days after she entered l'Hôpital. This new error confirmed the Parisians in the idea that the wretch De Lamotte, who had never been able to make her way so far as to the room appropriated to the Queen's women, had really interested the Queen herself.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Further particulars will be found in the *Memoirs of the Comte de Beugnot*, London: Hurst and Blackett, 1871, as he knew Madame de Lamotte from the days of her early childhood (when the three children, the Baron de Valois, who died captain of a frigate, and the two Mademoiselles de Saint Rémi, the last descendants of the Baron de Rémi, a natural son of Henry II., were almost starving), to the time of her temporary prosperity. In fact, he was with her when she burnt the correspondence of the Cardinal, in the interval the Court foolishly allowed between his arrest and her capture, and De Beugnot believed he had met at her house, at the moment of their return from their successful trick, the whole party engaged in deluding the Cardinal. It is worth noting that he was then struck by the face of Mademoiselle d'Olive, who had just personated the Queen in presenting a rose to the Cardinal. It may also be cited as a pleasing quality of Madame de Lamotte that she, "in her ordinary conversation, used the words *stupid* and *honest* as synonymous."—See *Beugnot*, vol. i. p. 60.

## CHAPTER II.

The Archbishop of Sens is appointed to the Ministry—The Abbé de Vermond's joy on the occasion—The Queen is obliged to take a part in business—Money sent to Vienna contrary to her inclination—Anecdotes—The Queen supports the Archbishop of Sens in office—Public rejoicings on his dismissal—Opening of the States-General—Cries of "*Vive le Duc d'Orléans!*"—Their effect upon the Queen—Mirabeau—He requests an embassy—Misfortunes induce the Queen to yield to superstitious fears—Anecdotes—Prejudices of the provincial deputies of the *tiers-état*—Causes of these prejudices—Death of the first Dauphin—Anecdotes.

THE Abbé de Vermond could not suppress his exultation when he succeeded in getting the Archbishop of Sens appointed head of the council of finance. I have more than once heard him say that seventeen years of patience were not too long a term for success in a Court ; that he spent all that time in gaining the end he had in view ; but that at length the Archbishop was where he ought to be for the good of the State. The Abbé from this time in the Queen's private circle no longer concealed his credit and influence ; nothing could equal the confidence with which he displayed the extent of his pretensions. He requested the Queen to order that the apartments appropriated to him should be enlarged, telling her that being obliged to give

audiences to bishops, cardinals, and ministers he required a residence suitable to his present circumstances. The Queen continued to treat him as she did before the Archbishop's arrival at Court; but the household showed him increased consideration: the word *Monsieur* preceded that of Abbé; and from that moment not only the livery servants but also the people of the antechambers rose when *Monsieur l'Abbé* was passing, though there never was, to my knowledge, any order given to that effect.

The Queen was obliged, on account of the King's disposition, and the very limited confidence he placed in the Archbishop of Sens, to take a part in public affairs. While M. de Maurepas lived she kept out of that danger, as may be seen by the censure which the Baron de Besenval passes on her in his memoirs for not availing herself of the conciliation he had promoted between the Queen and that minister, who counteracted the ascendancy which the Queen and her intimate friends might otherwise have gained over the King's mind.

The Queen has often assured me that she never interfered respecting the interests of Austria but once; and that was only to claim the execution of the treaty of alliance at the time when Joseph II. was at war with Prussia and Turkey; that she then demanded that an army of twenty-four thousand men should be sent to him instead of fifteen millions, an alternative which had been left to option in the treaty, in case the Emperor should have a just war to maintain; that she could not obtain her



object, and M. de Vergennes, in an interview which she had with him upon the subject, put an end to her importunities by observing that he was answering the mother of the Dauphin and not the sister of the Emperor. The fifteen millions were sent. There was no want of money at Vienna, and the value of a French army was fully appreciated.

"But how," said the Queen, "could they be so wicked as to send off those fifteen millions from the general post-office, diligently publishing, even to the street porters, that they were loading carriages with money that I was sending to my brother—whereas it is certain that the money would equally have been sent if I had belonged to another house; and, besides, it was sent contrary to my inclination."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This was not the first time the Queen had become unpopular in consequence of financial support afforded by France to her brother. The Emperor Joseph II. made, in November 1783 and in May 1784, startling claims on the republic of the United Provinces; he demanded the opening of the Scheldt, the cession of Maëstricht with its dependencies, of the country beyond the Meuse, the county of Vroenhoven, and a sum of seventy millions of florins. The first gun was fired by the Emperor on the Scheldt 5th November 1784. Peace was concluded 8th November 1785, through the mediation of France. The singular part was the indemnification granted to the Emperor: this was a sum of ten millions of Dutch florins; the articles 15, 16, and 17 of the treaty stipulated the quotas of it. Holland paid five millions and a half, and France, under the direction of M. de Vergennes, four millions and a half of florins, that is to say, nine millions and forty-five thousand francs, according to M. Soulavie. M. de Ségur, in his *Policy of Cabinets* (vol. iii.), says relative to this affair:—

"M. de Vergennes has been much blamed for having terminated, by a sacrifice of seven millions, the contest that existed between the United Provinces and the Emperor. In that age of philosophy men were still very uncivilised; in that age of

When the Comte de Moustier set out on his mission to the United States, after having had his public audience of leave he came and asked me to procure him a private one. I could not succeed even with the strongest solicitations: the Queen desired me to wish him a good voyage, but added that none but ministers could have anything to say to him in private, since he was going to a country where the names of *King* and *Queen* must be detested.

Marie Antoinette had then no direct influence over State affairs until after the deaths of M. de Maurepas and M. de Vergennes, and the retreat of M. de Calonne. She frequently regretted her new situation, and looked upon it as a misfortune which she could not avoid. One day, while I was assisting her to tie up a number of memorials and reports, which some of the ministers had handed to her to be given to the King, "Ah!" said she, sighing, "there is an end of all happiness for me, since they have made an intriguer of me." I exclaimed at the word. "Yes," resumed the Queen, "that is the right term; every woman who meddles with affairs above her understanding or out of her line of duty is an intriguer and nothing else; you will remember, however, that it is not my own fault, and that

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commerce they made very erroneous calculations; and those who accused the Queen of sending the gold of France to her brother would have been better pleased if, to support a republic devoid of energy, the blood of two hundred thousand men, and three or four hundred millions of francs, had been sacrificed, and at the same time the risk run of losing the advantage of peace dictated to England."—*Madame Campan.*

it is with regret I give myself such a title; the Queens of France are happy only so long as they meddle with nothing, and merely preserve influence sufficient to advance their friends and reward a few zealous servants. Do you know what happened to me lately? One day since I began to attend private committees at the King's, while crossing the *œil-de-bœuf*, I heard one of the musicians of the chapel say so loud that I lost not a single word, 'A Queen who does her duty will remain in her apartment to knit.' I said within myself, 'Poor wretch, thou art right: but thou knowest not my situation; I yield to necessity and my evil destiny.'” This situation was the more painful to the Queen inasmuch as Louis XVI. had long accustomed himself to say nothing to her respecting State affairs; and when, towards the close of his reign, she was obliged to interfere in the most important matters, the same habit in the King frequently kept from her particulars which it was necessary she should have known. Obtaining, therefore, only insufficient information, and guided by persons more ambitious than skilful, the Queen could not be useful in great affairs; yet, at the same time, her ostensible interference drew upon her, from all parties and all classes of society, an unpopularity, the rapid progress of which alarmed all those who were sincerely attached to her.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In a caricature of the time the King was represented at table with his consort. He had a glass in his hand; the Queen was raising a morsel to her lips; the people were crowding round with their mouths open. Below was written, “The King drinks; the Queen eats; the people cry out.”—*Anecdotes of the Reign of Louis XVI.*, vol. i.

Carried away by the eloquence of the Archbishop of Sens, and encouraged in the confidence she placed in that minister by the incessant eulogies of the Abbé de Vermond on his abilities, the Queen unfortunately followed up her first mistake of bringing him into office in 1787 by supporting him at the time of his disgrace, which was obtained by the despair of a whole nation. She thought it was due to her dignity to give him some marked proof of her regard at the moment of his departure; misled by her feelings she sent him her portrait enriched with jewelry, and a brevet for the situation of lady of the palace for Madame de Canisy, his niece, observing that it was necessary to indemnify a minister sacrificed to the intrigues of the Court and the factious spirit of the nation; that otherwise none would be found willing to devote themselves to the interests of the sovereign. However, on the day of the Archbishop's departure the public joy was universal, both at Court and at Paris: there were bonfires; the attorneys' clerks burnt the Archbishop in effigy, and on the evening of his disgrace more than a hundred couriers were sent out from Versailles to spread the happy tidings among the country seats. I have seen the Queen shed bitter tears at the recollection of the errors she committed at this period, when subsequently, a short time before her death, the Archbishop had the audacity to say, in a speech which was printed, that the sole object of one part of his operations, during his administration, was the salutary crisis which the Revolution had produced.

The benevolence and generosity shown by the King and Queen during the severe winter of 1788, when the Seine was frozen over and the cold was more intense than it had been for eighty years, procured them some fleeting popularity. The gratitude of the Parisians for the succour their Majesties poured forth was lively if not lasting. The snow was so abundant that since that period there has never been seen such a prodigious quantity in France. In different parts of Paris pyramids and obelisks of snow were erected with inscriptions expressive of the gratitude of the people. The pyramid in the *Rue d'Angiviller* was supported on a base six feet high by twelve broad; it rose to the height of fifteen feet, and was terminated by a globe. Four blocks of stone, placed at the angles, corresponded with the obelisk, and gave it an elegant appearance. Several inscriptions, in honour of the King and Queen, were affixed to it. I went to see this singular monument, and recollect the following inscription:—

“TO MARIE ANTOINETTE.

“Lovely and good, to tender pity true,  
Queen of a virtuous King, this trophy view;  
Cold ice and snow sustain its fragile form,  
But ev'ry grateful heart to thee is warm.  
Oh, may this tribute in your hearts excite,  
Illustrious pair, more pure and real delight,  
Whilst thus your virtues are sincerely prais'd,  
Than pompous domes by servile flatt'ry rais'd.”

The theatres generally rang with praises of the beneficence of the sovereigns: *La Partie de Chasse*

*de Henri IV.* was represented for the benefit of the poor. The receipts were very considerable.

When the fruitless measure of the Assembly of the Notables,<sup>1</sup> and the rebellious spirit in the parliaments, had created the necessity for States-General, it was long discussed in council whether they should be assembled at Versailles or at forty or sixty leagues from the capital; the Queen was for the latter course, and insisted to the King that they ought to be far away from the immense population of Paris. She feared that the people would influence the deliberations of the deputies; several memorials were presented to the King upon that question; but M. Necker prevailed, and Versailles was the place fixed upon.

The day on which the King announced that he gave his consent to the convocation of the States-General, the Queen left the public dinner, and placed herself in the recess of the first window of

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<sup>1</sup> The Assembly of the Notables, as may be seen in Weber's *Memoirs*, vol. i., overthrew the plans and caused the downfall of M. de Calonne. A Prince of the blood presided over each of the meetings of that assembly. Monsieur, afterwards Louis XVIII., presided over the first meeting.

"Monsieur," says a contemporary, "gained great reputation at the Assembly of the Notables in 1787. He did not miss attending his meeting a single day, and he displayed truly patriotic virtues. His care in discussing the weighty matters of administration, in throwing light upon them, and in defending the interests and the cause of the people, was such as even to inspire the King with some degree of jealousy. Monsieur openly said, 'That a respectful resistance to the orders of the Monarch was not blamable, and that authority might be met by argument, and forced to receive information without any offence whatever.'"—*Note by the Editor.*

her bed-chamber, with her face towards the garden. Her chief butler followed her, to present her coffee, which she usually took standing, as she was about to leave the table. She made me a sign to come close to her. The King was engaged in conversation with some one in his room. When the attendant had served her he retired ; and she addressed me, with the cup still in her hand : "Great Heavens ! what fatal news goes forth this day ! The King assents to the convocation of the States-General." Then she added, raising her eyes to heaven, "I dread it ; this important event is a first fatal signal of discord in France." She cast her eyes down, they were filled with tears. She could not take the remainder of her coffee, but handed me the cup, and went to join the King. In the evening, when she was alone with me, she spoke only of this momentous decision. "It is the Parliament," said she, "that has compelled the King to have recourse to a measure long considered fatal to the repose of the kingdom. These gentlemen wish to restrain the power of the King ; but they give a great shock to the authority of which they make so bad a use, and they will bring on their own destruction."

The double representation granted to the *tiers-état* was now the chief topic of conversation. The Queen favoured this plan, to which the King had agreed ; she thought the hope of obtaining ecclesiastical favours would secure the clergy of the second order, and that M. Necker felt assured that he possessed the same degree of influence over the